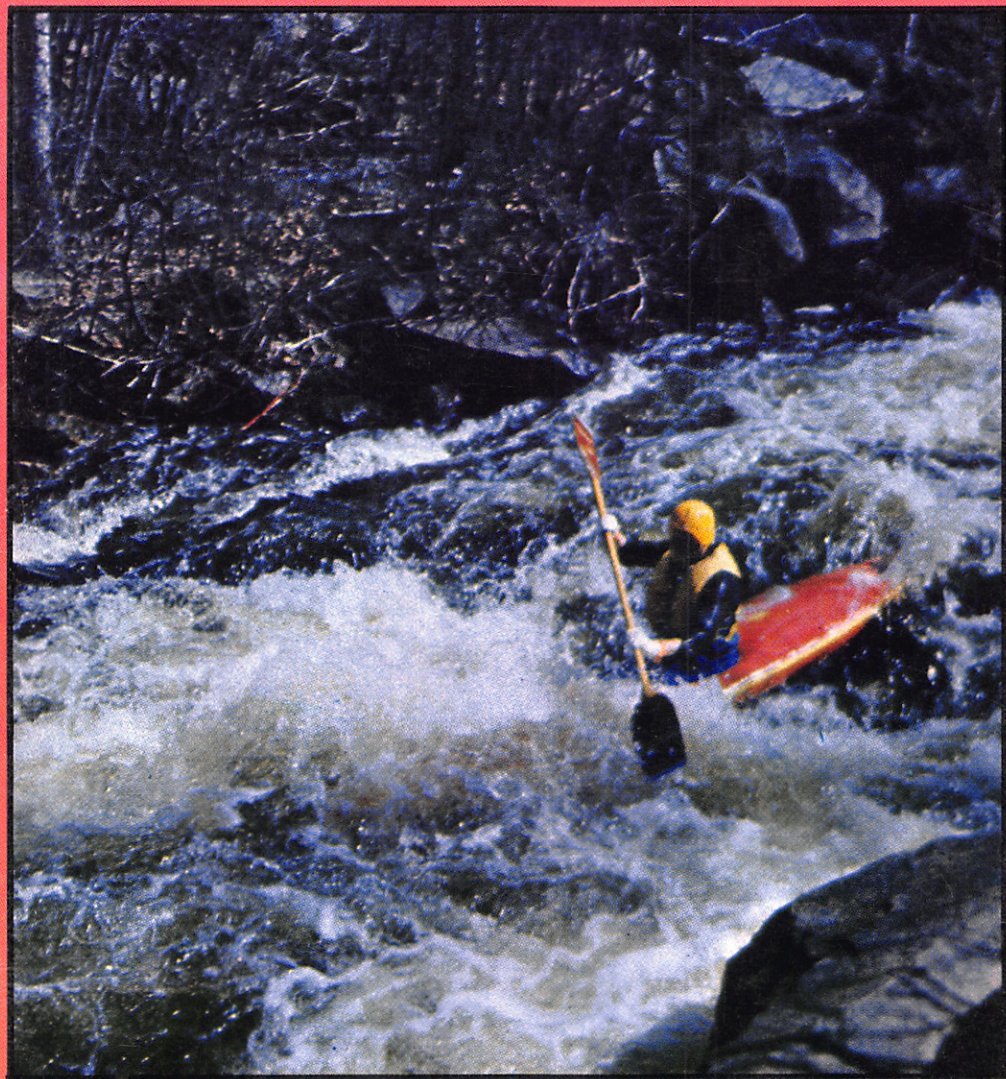


Bitter Sweet ^{75¢}

April, 1978 *The Magazine of Maine's Hills & Lakes Region* Vol. 1 No. 6



Inside: Kayaking
Old Lumbering Days
Finlandia

Dear Peter-

Apr. '78

It sure has been a long hard winter! So bad that the mice were unable to find food on the outside, thus they ate MA's peat pots, plant food, and worst of all, ate every seed that we saved from last year's fruits and vegetables which were drying.

I've never been in such a fix. They even ate hoe, rake, and fork handles.

Bert.



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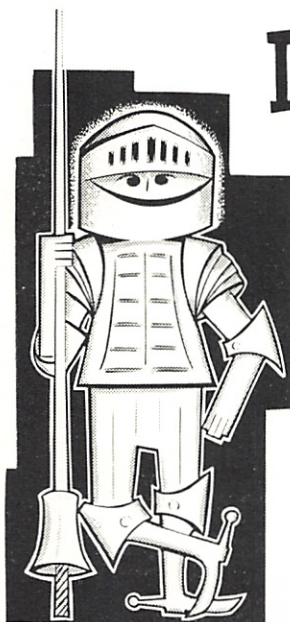
Dear Bert -

Times could be worse.

May I suggest that you come to our "NEW BARN" and see our new displays. We believe we have everything to solve your problems. We have 5 different brands of pack seeds, BURPEE, NORTHRUP KING, J.B. RICE, HARTS, and FERRY MORSE, plus our well known economical bulk seeds. We also have all the hoes, rakes and forks you'll ever need.

Peter

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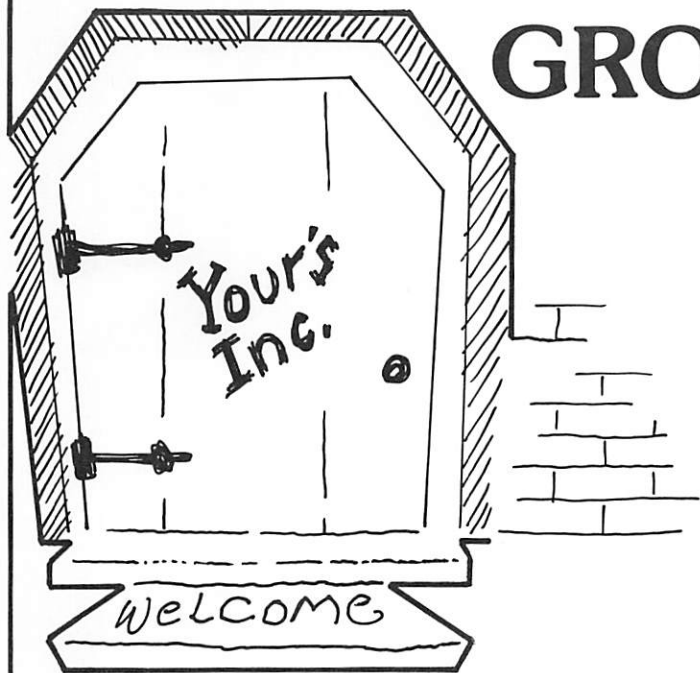
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Illustrations: Page 29, 36, Paula McKenney; Photos: Page 2, 3, Bill Haynes; Page 4, 5, 14, 17-19, 35, 45, Sandy Wilhelm; Page 6, 7, Al Wescott; Page 13, Cathy Flynn.
Cover Photo: Kayaking Waterford's Crooked River by Al Wescott



BitterSweet

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BitterSweet is published the first of each month by **BitterSweet**, One Madison Avenue, Oxford, Maine 04270. All rights reserved. Printed in U. S. A. by Western Maine Graphics, Inc.

Subscription Rates: U. S. Territory and Possessions, one year — 12 issues — \$8.00. 75¢ a copy at newsstands. Canadian and foreign addresses are \$2.00 a year additional. All correspondence regarding subscriptions, billing and/or payments should be addressed to **BitterSweet** at the above address.

Contributions: We encourage the submission of manuscripts, artwork and photography. We do ask that all such material be from local contributors and of local interest. Please submit to The Editor, **BitterSweet**, at the above address. We will return your material if it is accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. **BitterSweet** cannot be responsible for unsolicited material. Payment is made upon acceptance.

Publication Date: The first of each month.

Editorial Closing Date: Six weeks prior to Publication.

Advertising Deadline: One month prior to Publication Date.

Advertising: Contact Brenda Haynes at the above address or call: 743-8225

Maine is the nation's most heavily forested state, with 90 percent of the land covered by trees. In Oxford County alone, more than half a million cords of wood will be harvested this year.

Companies like the P. H. Chadbourne Co. in Bethel, Diamond Match Co. in West Peru, and Wilner Wood Products in Norway are among the largest non-paper company mills in the state.

When the old-time timber barons "logged over" dense woods in the Rangeley Lakes area at the turn of the century, they probably never thought that our industrial and economic base would still depend on trees in the 1970's.

Forestry and related industry is the backbone employer in Oxford County, with nearly 50 mills in operation, including 27 regular saw mills and three shingle mills.

Add another 20 or so bolt mills and numerous factories that produce furniture, cabinets, pallets, clothespins, matches, brush blocks, mouldings and so on, and it's clear that the woods are an essential resource of the region.

More than 100 loggers in this county harvest about ten percent of the state's five million cords of wood annually, including 75 million board feet of softwoods, 28 million board feet of hardwoods and 269,000 cords of pulpwood.

It takes at least six different types of work just to get the tree cut down, out of the forest and on the way to market: a forester to designate areas or trees to be cut; a logging boss to lay out the roads and log yards and to direct the crew; a chopper (who doesn't chop) to fell the trees and remove the limbs; a skidder man (who doesn't skid) to run a huge machine that hauls trees minus limbs to a main storage yard; a yard man to cut the long logs into shorter useable products, such as saw logs, pulpwood and turning bolts; and a trucker to load the wood on a truck and get it to the right market.

At the mills there are sawyers, millwrights, edgermen, designers, chemists, computer programmers, forklift operators and steam fitters, among other.

In this issue of **BitterSweet**, Cathy Flynn talks with one South Paris man for whom lumbering meant working five straight months in the "big woods" near Lake Umbagog, upcountry, where he drove teams

of horses.

Ken Kennagh, now 65, remembers the days when men and horses traversed the steep slopes of the mountains in Grafton Notch to bring lumber to the mills. Read what it was like then and what he thinks of lumbering today, on page 10.

For Austin Record and his son, Brad, owners of a small Norway sawmill specializing in custom cutting, lumbering is a family affair. Pat White Gorrie describes a lunchtime visit with the Record family on page 18.

To help those of us who are newcomers to the woods, the Maine Audubon Society has started a woodlot counselling program (Sweet Find, page 46) designed to help the small woodlot owner properly manage a resource whose value is suddenly soaring due to high costs of traditional oil and gas supplies. Advent of the wood-burning stove as a low-cost alternative source of energy has opened the state's oldest industry to a whole new breed of part-time woodsmen who, armed with chain saws, are taking to the woods to harvest their own fuel.

Sandy Wilhelm



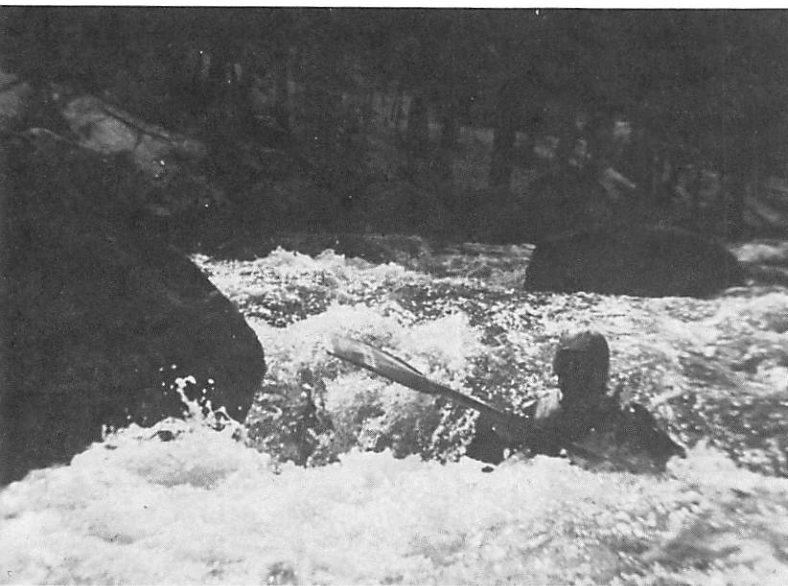
Kayaking Oxford County's Wildwaters

by Al Wescott



Mount Abram ski instructor Buzz Hollander maneuvers a drop on Crooked River in North Waterford.

Maine's rivers have been the stuff of legends since the days of Thoreau and Big Sabat. But few people are aware that some of the best wild water in the country can be found without ever crossing outside the Oxford County line.



Hollander blasts through a hole in the Little Androscoggin River below Greenwood City.

While scores of canoeists flock to rivers and streams at the height of the summer, the more solitary — and less common — kayaker will usually find some of his best water at this time of year, during the spring runoffs.

Dressed in either a wet suit or woolen long johns topped by a waterproof jacket and pants, a high-flotation life vest and crash helmet, sneakers, rubber booties and gloves, the kayaker takes to rushing rivers in search of what Norway sports enthusiast Al Wescott likens to the satisfaction of a first mountain ascent.

"You're out there totally on your own," says Wescott, a part-time Mt. Abram ski instructor. "Half the fun of it is finding places that have never been run and the other half is finding out if they can be run at all."

"When you make a good run through tough waters it's quite a thrill," he says, noting that width, topography, rock formation and flowage of any particular river will all contribute to the challenge of

the run.

The kayaker faces the river while wedged into the bucket seat of a 25 pound, 13 foot by 2 foot fiber glass or polymers craft, using a double-bladed paddle as well as his own body weight to maneuver the vessel. A waterproof spray skirt fastens the kayaker's waist to the cockpit cowling. Airbags are crammed into the boat's bow and stern for flotation.

Kayaking is designed to take folks where canoeists fear to tread.

It's a sport based on skill, luck and plenty of determination.

The key to its enjoyment, according to Wescott, who grew up on the shores of Sebago Lake, is to start out small with rivers that are fairly easy to handle, "pay your dues, swallow a lot of water, and get banged around a lot."

If that seems like fun, you're ready for the more challenging waters, many of which lie within the borders of Oxford County as Wescott divulges in the following article:

We stood huddled together, shouting, mutually bolstering our collective confidence. *Wild River* rampaging at near-flood is an impressive sight, especially when one is about to try ramming a 26-pound kayak down its throat.

"If I dip a paddle in that mess, I want an ejection seat in my boat."

"Nah. Think big. Hook it to a hang glider."

In retrospect such conversations sound like last-second pep rallies held by the self-condemned. But one hour and three miles later the three of us sat on the riverbank near Gilead, smiling, exhausted. The Good Lord had been willing, the Devil hadn't cared, and none of us had needed an ejection seat.

Buzz was already treating us to his cheerleader act, exhorting us. "C'mon guys. A week from now all that water will just be floating around in the ocean. Let's do it again."

Too many soggy years and broken paddles later, I sat beside another river listening to another conversation, one that keepers of wierd records might keep in mind.

"I wonder how many boats get trashed in Maine every year? The number must be astronomical."

The paddler stood, gazing whimsically at a canoe that looked as though the Goths, Huns and Vandals had all used it in a sacrificial celebration to the gods of destruction. But then again, he and his bowman had just completed all but two of a 22-mile Eastern Championship race down *Dead River* upcountry, so maybe he had a right to ask the question. Or to, at least, look whimsical.

Maine's rivers have been the stuff of legends since the days of Thoreau and Big Sabat. And with today's back-to-nature society being what it is, these rivers sometimes appear to have been roofed over with fiber glass, aluminum and canvas.

The lower *Dead* has played host to four National Championship races; the *Allagash* and *St. John* receive nationwide media coverage; the West Branch of the *Penobscot* (north of Millinocket) is a popular rafting run; and even the upper *Kennebec* (south of Moosehead Lake), with its fearsome gorge and "z-turn" has now been kayaked.

But, if you're lucky enough to live in the Oxford Hills area and are so inclined, you can easily reach some of the country's best wildwater — without ever crossing the

county line.

Most of these rivers have yet to be dissected, catalogued or included in the various guidebooks. Sure, accounts of Oxford County's *Rapid River* (east of Errol, New Hampshire), once the site of the National Covered Boat Championships, or of the *Magalloway* below Aziscoos Dam appear in print. But, for two months each spring and a month or so each fall, when most folks are worrying about high water creeping up their cellar stairs, an experienced kayaker can find mind-bending miles of whitewater nearby which nobody knows about — yet.

These small rivers are technically demanding; they can look like Aunt Mazie's rock garden one day, and a washing machine gone berserk the next. To get a handle on the difficulty, whitewater buffs evaluate such factors as season of the year, river depth and width, topography, the river's drop per mile and, if known, the river's flow rate measured in cubic feet per second (cfps).

For instance, lower *Dead* rolling at over 3600 cfps is physically and mentally intimidating. The one trip I've made at that water level made me swear off kayaking for at least a week; another trip done at 1200 cfps was a relaxing paddle in the sun.

But enough of these monster runs, these big rivers. How about those only a few people have attempted?

Wild River cascades out of Evans Notch and meets the *Androscoggin* at Gilead. It was undoubtedly named by a pragmatic settler who called it the way he saw it, and who never dreamed that anyone would try to float a boat in it.

The last three miles are an express route of *haystacks* — standing waves caused by water compression — and holes that drop at a rate of 56 feet per mile; and any trip down it imprints Speed-Graphic images in the mind.

The narrow, boulder-strewn river from Wild River Campground to Hastings has been kayaked at least once, but the lower river from Hastings offers "bigger," more powerful water. Perhaps wisely, the Appalachian Mountain Club has deleted *Wild River* from its guidebook.

The upper *Swift* (north of Mexico) and *Sunday River* (near Newry) also offer invigorating whitewater, although tamer than what the Wild disgorges.

While annual races are run on the lower *Swift*, nobody seems to attempt the river

above Roxbury. From a bridge about three miles above Byron the river is runnable except for the gorge at Byron, which is also called Coos Canyon. The falls at the head of the gorge are unrunnable, but a walk along its rim is a welcome diversion from paddling and should not be overlooked.

Anyone intent on running the gorge below the falls ought to be forewarned. Once, at medium water, I managed to lower my boat into an eddy and somehow shoehorn myself into the cockpit. My problems were just beginning, I discovered, as I was unable to paddle, keep the boat upright and clip on the sprayskirt all at the same time.

Buzz (his last name is Hollander, and he is a part-time South Paris resident and fellow Mt. Abram ski instructor) solved the dilemma another way.

"Watch this one," he hollered, sitting in his kayak on a narrow ledge some 12 feet above the water. With that he launched — airborne and vertical — into the river.

His kayak "only leaked a little" after that, he reported.

Sunday River, in Newry, rumbles along in worthy fashion and, except for one spot, is canoeable in all but extremely high water. But at that stage it's a kayak river for the first two miles below "Letter S" gorge, and make no mistake about it.

About a mile downstream, there's a right-hand bend where the river drops ten feet in fifty, and there's a boulder smack in the middle of the bend. Buzz calls it "ZE Big Hoobie," and when viewed bow-on, it's aptly named. And, for some reason, Big Hoobie always exacts its toll in the form of a patch of my left elbow whenever I try to slither around it.

One time I watched Telstar Athletic Director Tim Lavalley literally lift a battered 18-foot canoe out of the eddy behind Big Hoobie after we'd learned, too late, that we couldn't punch a boat that length through the bend at that water level.

Pete Kailey of Bethel's Sunri Ski Shop has voiced the intention of hosting a wildwater race on *Sunday River*. If and when he does, it ought to be a typically satisfying horror show for the crash-and-bash types.

Another river, *Crooked*, begins in Albany and ends 57 miles later near Sebago Lake. The guidebook says that "in many ways it combines more in the way of northern scenery, quick water, clean water... than any

other in central New England."

Crooked is becoming an increasingly popular river, perhaps because of just such rhetoric. But some of us do our best to keep the crowds elsewhere, and for just that reason a wrecked canoe was once block-and-tackled 20 feet up into the branches of an old tree alongside the water. An appropriate sign was suspended from the canoe, warning all travellers to beware of "extremely high waters and flash flooding."

At best, however, only a few paddling parties finished the trip casting wary eyes over their shoulders.

The best stretch is a mile-and-a-half run in North Waterford, where the river boils downhill 50 feet in one half-mile stretch.



The best kayaking nearby is that of the *Little Androscoggin*, where it flows out of Greenwood City. As the AMC guidebook says, "The first four miles are too steep and rapid to canoe."

"Super," said Buzz.

"Great," said Dave.

Having previously tried single-manning an 18-footer down the same place, and having decided that such an experience was not really worth entering in my fat black book of memorable mistakes, I had a vague idea of what was ahead.

I gulped.

While mentally preparing myself to be sponged into a plastic baggie sometime before nightfall, I attempted some self-psychoing by repeatedly reminding myself, "Half the fun of this business is finding never-run places, and the other half is finding out if they CAN be run. So..."

The lower *Dead* drops 30 feet per mile, and the *Wild* drops 56. Well, the *Little Andy* drops 80 feet for the first mile, and falls away another 80 feet for the second. It's a good place for the neophyte to get washed, rinsed, spun and recycled.

There's one particularly interesting spot about a mile east of Greenwood. Three narrow chutes gobble at the boat before the kayaker arrives head-on at a 15-foot ledge that looks like the Glenn Canyon Dam. The river, of course, plunges at a right-angle into a pool farther downstream.

"Pretty good place to get dishpan body," somebody once said.

Recollections:

Ken Kennagh: A Fond Farewell For Lumbering's "Good Ol' Days"

by Cathy Flynn

"It was the only thing there was to do. When the ground froze in the fall, you went into the woods," says former teamster Ken Kennagh. "We worked in the woods or we starved."



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(See Reverse Side)

"We didn't stop and think about what else to do. It was the only thing there was to do. When the ground froze in the fall, you went into the woods."

So says Ken Kennagh, now 65, who is one of Oxford County's last "teamsters" — those men who drove teams of horses during the logging days of the early 1900's.

"There was no choice," says Kennagh, half smiling behind a pair of rimless glasses. "We worked in the woods or we starved."

Because he was lucky enough to have grown up with horses, word of his horse-handling expertise landed him his first job managing a team at the budding age of 14.

"At that time, I felt lucky to be qualified. There were always plenty of men waiting for a job. Back then it was \$1 a day and board and I was never out of a job a day in my life.

Another way of keeping the team from losing its load going up or down sharp inclines was to use what were called "snub ropes." The teams going up and down were timed so that they could simultaneously hold each other from losing footing.

"You had to be friendly with the men who ran the snub ropes," Kennagh says. "If you didn't like the guy, you kicked for three or four years until they replaced him. It was dangerous work and there was no room for foolin'."

Bridle chains, which were also used for traction, kept some teams from racing down mountainous terrain, he says.

At the turn of the century, logging operations began in the early fall when crews went into the "big woods" upriver to build the crude logging camps. Sometimes 300 or more men would be housed in a single bunkhouse. The 30 teamsters were bedded down in a separate cabin.

The "choppers," or loggers who actually

"They called us 'hair pounders' because all we did was pound the horses to make 'em move."

"I'll tell you we *worked*. They talk about the good ol' days, but I wouldn't have those days back again."

Working ten hour shifts in the frozen woods near Rangeley Lake, the young Kennagh drove a team of horses that brought thousands of cords of wood to area lakes where the logs would be stacked until spring thaw. When the ice went out, the logs went downriver.

"We logged those mountains with horses," he says.

Slopes were so steep, the men used "hay hills" or beds of hay in the road for traction. As long as the team was moving, they wouldn't slip, but if the teamster stopped for any reason, it could mean death to the horses or the man.

"You braced your feet and hollered like hell," Kennagh says of his technique.

Kennagh poses with his black horse Jack, near Grafton Notch in the late 1930's. Jack weighed about a ton.

did the ax work on trees, were a rough lot of men, he says. Given to uncertain temper rages which sometimes resulted in knife fights, these mostly-uneducated crew members were left to themselves.

"We didn't get anywheres near 'em," Kennagh says. "We stayed right on the load."

The weather, too, could be as mean as the men.

"A storm came in once off Lake Umbagog so that in 20 minutes you couldn't see your hand in front of your face. It's a good thing we had the horses or we wouldn't have found the camp. They followed the road.

"And cold! Why, my aching sarsaparilla. Well, I'll tell ya, you see how bald I am? It was so cold that your eyes would freeze right together.

"We had two teamsters; one would drive until he couldn't see and then the other would drive. Well, I got the bright idea to get me one of those leather helmets. Well, I wore it, and it was warm; but it sweat my head so, it took all my hair out."

Frostbite was also a common complaint.

"We had to cut a hole in the lake. You stuck

your feet in it and it took the frost right out of your feet. That's how we kept 'em warm."

For the off-hours, after the horses were bedded and the men were fed, a game of poker was about all there was in the isolated woods.

"I see one man go into a game with a Sears and Roebuck check for one cent that he had changed to read one dollar. Half the people didn't know it and he played off it all night."

"We really didn't have no off-hours," he says. "We hung our wet boots over the stove at night and if we were lucky, they were dry by morning."

Kennagh spent eight winters "upcountry" in the logging days and then decided to run a dairy farm in Fryeburg, where he and the former Frances Murphy of South Paris raised their family.

Then, for \$75 investment, the couple bought land on the Hebron Road in South Paris, cleared it with a Model A turned tractor and built the home where they live today.

Wayne Kennagh, the 39-year old son of

the former teamster, runs his own part-time logging business in North Waterford.

He concedes that for today's lumberman, logging is as tough as it ever was.

"A fellow cutting wood, for what he's got invested, he's getting a pretty small return on his money," the young Kennagh says. "You can't find woodlots. It's too long between woodlots. The payments keep building up and you just can't make enough."

His father interrupts.

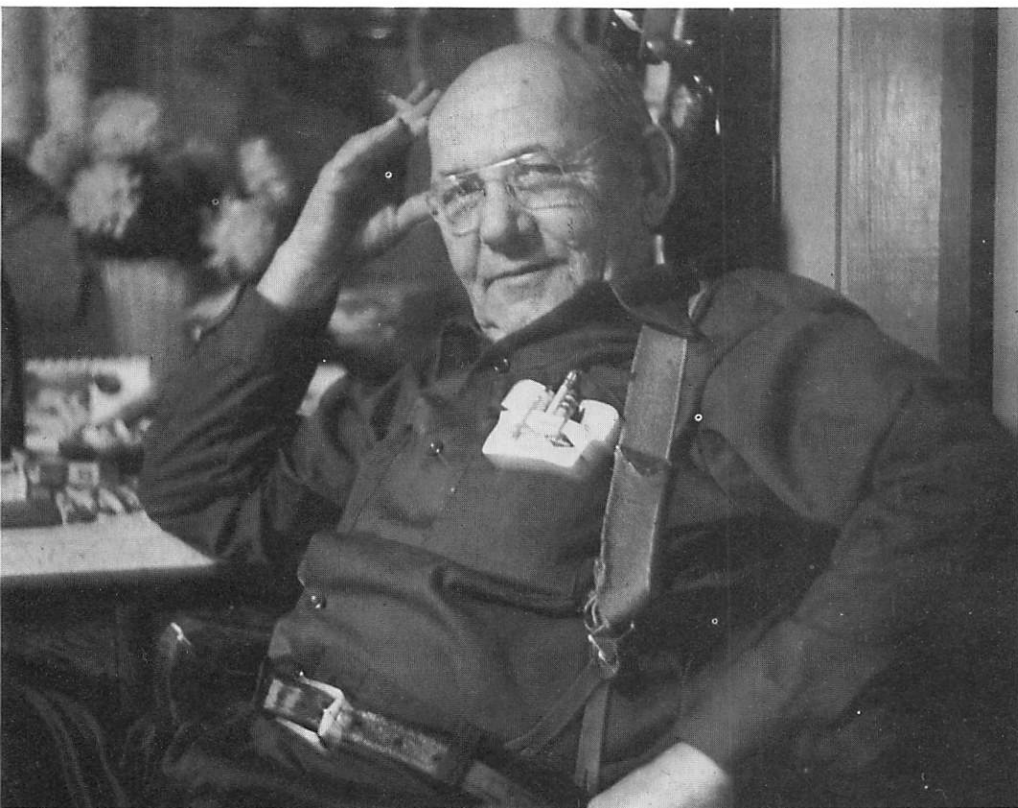
"Now you see the trucks they haul wood to market on and they're paying \$35,000 to \$40,000 for the truck — for the truck!"

"When I did it, it was the only way you could do it. I still say a man and his horse today could probably take home, at the end of the week, just exactly as much money as they do with that \$30,000 skidder. Horses don't tear up so much stuff, either. I believe the day will come when there will be woodlots that they won't allow these goddamn skidders on — they break the top soil. I've seen woodlots that'll make you sick."



Kennagh at 28, with a team at the Flanders Mill on Buckfield's Streaked Mountain. It took three days for Kennagh to collar the spirited white half of this pair.

"They cooked the noontime beans in lard, and no matter how quick you'd get from the pot to the stump where you could sit down and eat 'em, they'd congeal on that cold tin plate and you'd have to cut 'em with a fork. The coffee was so strong, you'd have to get a new tin cup every week or so."



Kennagh reminiscing about his teamster days at his South Paris home.

"Someday, if you want a picture of what's really happening, you go down to Bean's Restaurant and sit in that booth on the right hand side and watch the pulp trucks go by. Take a look at the load of logs. Most of the time a log a foot through is a big log. That's ridiculous. We used to use those for skidding, we'd leave 'em right in the road. Now they log 'em.

"I'd give \$100 for a picture of the log I hauled up the Buckfield road on a sled with a pair of horses. That log measured six feet across. If they ever saw a log like that today, they'd pass out.

"They see a pine two to three feet through today and say, 'Whew, that's a big tree! That was a small tree back then. Lots of times they didn't even cut 'em. Geez!

"Times have changed, you'd better b'lieve it."

Flynn is a free-lance journalist living in Buckfield.

FOR THEIR FINDING ME

For their finding me, I wore no clothes
beneath the bridge in the snow by the car.
The woman said, "He's alive."
Her hope was my blue cough.

Here I am raped by hose and new blood.
My belly has borne clamps.
I feel only the sense of things
like a baby shot full of womb.

At birth, squeezed into such a room,
ecstasy was the surprise of it —
the scream of light and pain,
thick air punching up stiff lungs,
and the awful thrust and tug of time.
For their finding me then,
I wore veins for hair
and cried.

John Garnham

Oxford Hills Finns: Sisu In Action

by Sandy Wilhelm

(The Second In A Series)



The Cummings farm

There are as many different English definitions for the word *sisu* as there are Finns to define it.

For retired minister John Haverinen, *sisu* is that quality which inspired Finland to courageously fight a Russian invasion of the homeland during World War II and then, following a Russian victory, repay the entire imposition of heavy reparations without aid from any outside country.

For Haverinen's sister, Lillian Cummings, it's whatever enabled her, when a small girl, to withstand a nasty gash on her knee and never inform her parents of the injury.

For Lillian's 61-year-old husband, Konsto, it's a combination of those factors which have been largely responsible for the prosperity of the rambling family farm on King Hill in South Paris.

Konsto has never lived anywhere else. His father, August, was South Paris' first Finnish settler, having joined the Mikkonen clan in the area's earliest Finnish settlement in West Paris at the turn of the century, and then migrating to King Hill in 1908. August and West Paris settlement-founder Jacob

Mikkonen wound up related by marriage. Mikkonen's niece, Ella, became August's wife.

It was from Mikkonen, a shrewd, ambitious businessman who recruited dozens of relatives from his home in Kuhmo, Finland to work the woods and farmland of the Oxford Hills, that August Komulainen received the Americanized surname Cummings.

No one knows for sure what it was that drew August Cummings from West Paris to the high ridge land of King Hill, but Konsto believes the move was probably for economic reasons. The rundown, early-American farmhouse and the rocky, overgrown fields surrounding it were probably all the young farmer could afford.

Not long after he bought the farm, on Valentine's Day, 1911, fire burned all but part of the barn to the ground. The family moved into a newly-constructed hen house and boarded some of the children with friends while the home was rebuilt.

August and his bride worked long and hard to clear and reseed the fields which

stretched the incline from King Hill toward the base of Streaked Mountain. To plant their crop of sweet corn, the couple carefully maneuvered the steeply sloping land with teams of horses. Like their West Paris Finnish neighbors, they also developed small surrounding woodlots for extra income and raised a few milking cows. They diligently worked the wild blueberry fields lining the edge of the ridge and grew apples for a short spell during the 1920's.

Ella Cummings, a slight, almost frail woman, worked alongside her husband in the barn and the fields, as was the custom of Finnish women, giving birth to seven children and tending to housework and cooking, as well. Two of the children perished in the worldwide flu epidemic of 1918. The mortality rate among Finnish children was apparently high, especially in the case of deaths due to accidental causes, because of the frequent absence of the mother from her children.

A small Finnish sauna, constructed from lumber cut on the property, was one of the first additions made to the set of buildings with the stunning view of Streaked Mountain. The sauna was used not only for the traditional Finnish Saturday night "inside and outside" cleanings, but also to smoke meat and to tar cross country skis.

At the age of 12, Konsto quit school. He had finished classes at the tiny nearby King Hill School, which he had attended as part of an almost entirely Finnish student body. Continuing on to high school would mean a long daily trek to and from downtown South Paris. It didn't seem worth the trip and he was anxious to take up farming.

Slowly, the neighborhood around King Hill began to fill with other Finnish families who, like the Cummings family, had bought up deteriorating farms in order to begin the back-breaking task of restoring them to their former prosperity. In 1912, the Finnish Lutheran Church, with a congregation numbering close to 100, was founded on King Hill. (The building was later moved down the Buckfield Road closer to town). Like its West Paris Finnish Congregational Church counterpart, the place functioned as the religious and social focal point of local Finnish life for nearly the next half century.

August Cummings was one of the church founders and the Cummings home became a gathering spot for church-related activities. Konsto recalls the many times that visiting

ministers would be put up for days at a time by his parents. There was always room at the farm for another Finn.

In 1946, Konsto took over the farm from his father. One of the first things he did was to increase the size of the milking herd, adding a few Registered Holsteins and experimenting with breeding. Gradually, the milking stock grew from the 15 animals he inherited from his father to the 32 head it numbered at its height in 1976.

Improvement of the pasture land meant that there was more money in raising feed for the cows than in growing sweet corn for canning to sell to A. L. Stewart's in South Paris, as his father had done. He gave up corn completely.

For a while, the family raised cucumbers for sale to the Bessey pickle shop located across from the county building in South Paris. But, blueberries had already proven themselves to be a pretty steady cash crop. In 1949, Konsto began raking the berries for sale to Stewart's, rather than picking them by hand. Burning and fertilizing the fields greatly increased their numbers. With help from his four sons, he steadily expanded the crop.

For a short time in the mid-1950's, feldspar from a small quarry lying in the midst of the blueberry fields was sold to the West Paris feldspar mill under a lease arrangement.

Until 1953, all the field work was done solely with horses. Then one day the animals ran away with Lillian and the family traded them in for a tractor. Getting around on the steep inclines with the machine has always been a tricky business, even for someone like Konsto, for whom the familiar terrain is as comfortable as a pair of favorite slippers.

Although farming has taken up a large percentage of his time, it is the woods work that Konsto has always loved best.

"I have always been more interested in the woods than in anything else," he confides, a ruggedly compact, quiet man with piercing blue eyes and a ready half-smile.

"It's in the woods that I feel happiest, even today. That's where I can relax."

Although allergy trouble has slowed his farming somewhat of late (with 10 heifers all that now remains of his herd), Konsto still takes to the woods for both work and solace; wandering confidently along the familiar, worn paths, marking in his mind the trees that are ready, perhaps cutting a little pulp, as much for pleasure as for profit.

In many ways, the story of the Cummings farm typifies the saga of the small, diversified New England farms which thrived at a time when working a little bit of a lot of things could provide a good family income and, a disciplined, satisfying existence. The Cummings have raised four sons and two grown daughters on their farm, and have another young girl still living at home.

Although he traded horses for tractor and a hand bucket for mechanized milking machinery, Konsto's operation of the farm has differed very little from the way his father ran things. True, the house, which once typified the Finnish penchant for a "no frills" existence with its absence of cupboards and closets, has been remodeled by Lillian and Konsto to include more

conveniences. But, the day-to-day work — clearing fields, planting crops, cutting wood — has remained remarkably the same for the past 70 years.

Recently, however, Konsto has experienced changing times.

"I could see what was coming. Farming is getting so big, there's not room for people like me anymore," he admits, apparently without remorse.

Whether loss of the New England farm lifestyle will also herald a demise of those revered qualities of *sisu* among local Finns remains to be seen. The love of hard work, the determination and stubbornness which characterized the Finns who settled these

parts during the early years of this century were ideally suited to the farming way of life.

Hard work paid off for most Finns. And it won them the respect of their Yankee neighbors. Finnish children may have been ridiculed in the early days for their broken command of the English language, or for the strange-looking sandwiches they carried to school on dark bread; but, as Konsto recalls, nobody ever hesitated to hire a Finn once he was grown.

To a large extent, traits like courage and stamina are dictated by circumstances of the times. And, if people like the Cummings worry a little that third and fourth generation Finns may have sacrificed a little of the spunk of their early stock because of today's easy times, they are not unlike their non-Finnish neighbors in their concern.

The feeling of strangeness and, sometimes, inferiority, which grew out of the Cummings generation due to differences of language and customs has disappeared now. Finnish kids are the same as any other except that some of them have names that are hard to pronounce and even more difficult to spell.

But, the pride derived from rewards reaped from a hard-working, almost stoical lifestyle, and an appreciation of the heritage which gave rise to those traits is something which most Finnish parents, like the Cummings, hope to pass on to their children.

"It's not a false pride, but an earned pride," explains Lillian, warmly.

That *earned* pride sparks Lillian as she lists the credits due the Finns (among Finnish firsts is the introduction to this country of the sauna, cross-country skiing, selective cutting as a means of woodlot management, and the log cabin, which was first constructed by the Finns at the Delaware settlement in the 1600's). It's the pride that keeps so many local Finns closely in touch with their native homeland while other ethnic groups lost hold long ago; the pride that prompts the Finns to overcome a natural reserve and reticence, and to talk in animated tones of the delights of turnip pie and dark, home-brewed coffee.

"It's a love and respect for Finland that also recognizes that America comes first," explains John Haverinen, who has made the pilgrimage back to Kuhmo. "Our love of Finland taught us our love of America."

"Many of our parents and grandparents were recruited to this country by propa-

APRIL

April, like a teen-age girl
One minute is all smiles,
Laughing, flirting, full of charm
Practicing her wiles.

The next she is a pouting lass
Overwhelmed with deep distress,
Full of needs of every kind
Demanding now a new spring dress.

So Miss April has her way,
And as always through the years,
She learns as all young maidens do
To use a Woman's Weapon, tears.

Inez Farrington



*Konsto and Lillian
Cummings*

ganda," observes Lillian.

"Northern Europeans were noted for their hard-working ways, so they were welcomed here. America was presented to them as a land of milk and honey, where they could make their fortune. They found out that wasn't necessarily the case. Life was hard here, too, but they were up to the challenge.

"I think every generation tries to make things a little better for the next one to come

along. Konsto and I didn't go to college. College was, for us, an unobtainable goal. But, so far, all our children have gone.

"We figure, that way, they'll have a choice whether to work with their heads or with their backs. But, either way they'll have an appreciation for the hard-working person. And, we hope they'll always stick to the old honest-dollar way of life."

THE SPRING ON NEVER'S HILL

The stream that surges from the mountain's heart
Onto the vee-shaped spillway, falls in cold
Cascades into a hollowed log beneath,
And overflows. This rough-hewn reservoir,
Constructed solidly by human hands,
Was built to outlast their mortality.
Where are those tired horses, thirsty men
And straining oxen who once climbed this grade
And paused to drink and rest? They now are dust
In some forgotten graveyard, leaving us
This visible reminder of the past ...
A well-made trough, turned green with age and moss.
The water that it holds is clear and pure:
What legacy can we assign our heirs?

Otta Louis Chase

Norway's A. B. Record & Sons Sawmill: A Family Affair

by Pat White Gorrie



Brad Record

A kitchenful of kids and a fat brown dog swarm in and out among table legs and around Austin Record and his son, Brad, as they swing into a foot-tapping "Soldier's Joy," while Eva's yeasty oatmeal rolls cool on the stove top and the soup warms in an iron pot. It's dinner break over at the A. B. Record & Sons Sawmill in Norway.

Sylvia, Brad's red-cheeked, dimpled, laughing-eyed wife, slips out of her sawdust-sprinkled snowmobile suit (her winter "pit person" uniform) and hugs her three-year old Deanna. One of these days, she'll join the music-fest, but right now she's still a learner on the guitar ("... and it's a slow process").

No matter how cold or hot the weather, the whole family, except for Terry, who helped start the business but now works elsewhere, works under the big roof; custom-cutting lumber for a variety of customers, ranging from bachelors who want old cherry trees sawn into table tops to families building houses or barns. The Records will do any size job, as fast as possible, working overnight if necessary.

Loggers sometimes need plank bridges built in a hurry in order to move their logs out over streams, and the Records don't waste any time sawing as many of the 3" thick oak planks as are needed to get the job

Austin and Sylvia Record at work in the family sawmill

done. Brad drives the truck when he isn't working alongside his father, who is the sawyer.

Austin rolls huge logs of hemlock, basswood, white ash, pine, oak, hackmatack or any other wood someone brings him into the huge logging saw, and Brad tosses the scrap slabs onto a pile, then runs the others through the edger. They come out in beautiful, neat slabs... some as long as 20 or 24 feet... and it is Sylvia who lifts them off.

There's a certain rhythm the three acquire working together, and after awhile the noise and whirl of the machines appear to fade. The wood becomes the thing, as the observer sees it change from tree trunk to house joists or siding or beams. Some of the wood may be shipped to Kittery where it will end up being cut into strips and made into lobster traps.

What makes the A. B. Record & Sons Sawmill more than merely a money-making endeavor is its family atmosphere and the country music which works like a punctuation point whenever family members sit down to rest. Brad plays the guitar and dobro a lot and the mandolin a little, and Austin can play up a storm on his fiddle. He, too, plays the guitar and was part of a five-man group called The Maine Melody Mountaineers who played weekly over Norway's radio station a few years back. Square dances hereabouts were livelier, too, when Austin showed up with his fiddle in hand.

Shy, sweet-faced Eva keeps the whole works tied together with her wonderful cooking and her riding herd on the children. She's the company bookkeeper, too, and pinch-hits in the big barn if there's a rush-job with the lumber.

The soup was hot. The kids were hungry. Austin and Brad finished up the last chorus of "Rippling Waves" and sat down to eat. The wood could wait a little longer.

Gorrie is a free-lance journalist living in Otisfield.



BitterSweet

Notes:

POETIC PUZZLE

The following poem was written by a one-time 1930's, according to Ruth Colby, who kindly resident of the place it celebrates, sometime during the arranged for it to arrive at our desk:

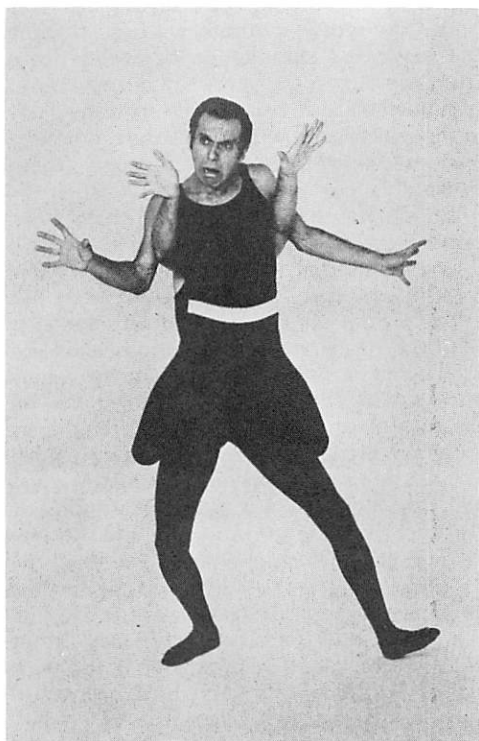
ON PARIS AS IT WAS — AND IS

There is an ancient *Maxim*, it is known both near and far,
"Tell me with whom you live, and I will tell you who you are."
There came a man to our town, and he was wond'rous wise
But when he looked the village through, it gave him a surprise;
The hill-top is not very large, yet he could clearly view
At least a dozen *Valleys* and perhaps a *Grover* too.
He saw some *Brooks*, both large and *Small*, and shortly came to know
We have no bridge, we've lost our *Ford* and so we have to *Rowe*.
The water is not very deep and none need be afraid
For, though the current may be *Swift*, in places one can *Wade*.
"This is a deserted village, there is not any doubt.
I've not met a single *Soule* in all I've been about;
And yet, from nearly every house, a *Flagg* floats on the air
And that's as patriotic as people anywhere."
He saw some *Stones*, for *Pavin* cut, and piled in heaps or *Cairns*.
A most attractive *Marble* house, and quite a group of *Barnes*.
When (*Stearnest*) men with *Barrows* had moved those *Stones* away,
The *Birchfield* was a lovely place, where little children play.
But when he saw the people it made him wonder more.
Such goings and such *Cummings* he had never seen before.
"These people all must like to *Reed* for I can clearly see
Some *Scribners* and a lot of books from *Curtis* company.
The people are not *Aldrich*, and *Silver* some may lack
But, *Shaw*, they'll laugh in summer when they get the *Dimans* back."
On entering the village store his feelings got a jog;
For, though the day outside was clear, inside was *Mister Fogg*.
"I'm sure that this is *Hearth's* own home," he sang in happy tune
"For, though so ill when I arrived, I have been *Heald* right soon."
He asked me was there any game scattered about the hill?
"Why, yes, I know a family of *Does* live near here still."
And then he laughed most heartily, as I was forced to say
I knew that all the *Bucks* had either died or moved away.
And, though sometimes, a *Sparrow* comes to pass the summer here
We hate to have the *Partridges* and *Robbins* disappear.
But *Wolfe* and *Lyon* in our *Field* add to our sport, but then
I'm glad to know that *Daniels* between me and *Lyonsden*.
For dangers such as these beset, it cannot be denied
That both the parson and his son seem half inclined to *Hyde*.
In the hottest days of summer, and this seems very queer,

The people do not feel the heat, they have *Snow* houses here.
 And then again in winter, when fiercest storm-waves roll,
 There's *Atwood* here and *Ellen Wood* and quite a lot of *Cole*.
Brown is the local color; but on a summer day
 The Country Club will sometimes show *Black, Brown, White, Green* and *Gray*.
 A mixture quite as odd of trades, here met the stranger's view.
 He saw a *Carter* and a *Smith* and then a *Potter* too.
 "I cannot understand at all what all these queer things mean.
 A *Cooper* and a *Hooper* stand idle on the green.
 'Tis really most bewildering!" And as he turned away
 A *Mason* and a *Joyner* were just starting in to play.
 He saw two churches on the hill, and here's an odd case, too.
 Although he saw two churches, he only saw one *Pugh*.
 The spires almost *Pierce* the sky, and when the church bell rings,
 It takes a *Royal* family to match our show of *Kings*.
 Our *Fields* laugh in the harvest, and here all boasting stops.
 Though most fields are abundant, we've scanty *Cotton* crops.
 Now maker of our *Mott-o*, lest you your *Record Marr*,
 I've plainly said with whom we live, now tell us who you are.

Annie Esther Eastman

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH THE TOWN MIMES



Victor Azzam

Tony Montanaro's Celebration Mime Ensemble (Nat White, George Sand, Jane Crosby, Douglas Leach, Claire Sikoryak and Victor Azzam) broke their own record for professionalism in their going away present of a "rehearsal" before a crowd packed into church pews and strewn across exercise mats at the big red barn in South Paris recently.

The troupe was on its way south for an eight week tour of South and North Carolina and Florida.

The exquisitely trained bodies moved together and apart like components of a fine Swiss watch. They became everything: a Chinese dragon, the stone image ("...of a lost soul"), a brace of motorcycle-riding Hell's Angels, a tree, a guitar, a tug-of-war, Beauty... even the Beast.

Tiny Claire's legs and arms became the wings of a caterpillar-metamorphosed-into-a-butterfly in a new piece called "Insects."

George became a fly who lost a foot in a very sticky, almost visible mess.

"The Dog" (based on a Ferlenghetti poem) was Victor, whom neither mongrel nor pure-bred could ever out-dog in tongue-

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If You Can't Lick It, Quit

Fiction by Anthony R. Stone

People came from all over to see what a coal fire looked like after we got our new furnace up there in Milford, Maine, where I grew up. What they didn't know was that the fire they admired so much could have been just as wrong as they thought it was right. See, I was in charge of it, and didn't know myself whether a couple of buckets of coal would ever explode into roaring flames like pine-knots do, or just sort of go on simmering for hours like it did, and never really get going.

For awhile there, I spent a lot of time watching and waiting for the flames, until one day... but wait, that's getting ahead of my story.

Before we got that new furnace, we'd had a regular wood burner, like all our neighbors. But, my father, being kind of progressive, you might say, must have made up his mind to quit worrying about stoking fires during the night. Besides, I'd just turned twelve that year and I guess he decided to push the responsibility for keeping our big house warm to me.

Buying that new contraption that was advertised as being so much better, *modern*, I think they called it, was probably just a come-on to get me interested. Which I never was. And thanks to our fancy coal-burner, never will be; even if I think it was my father's ambition to get me started in a career of heating. That might have been all right. But, as you'll see, neither one of us, especially me, counted on a career in plumbing, too.

Our house was built on a funny cellar. Like a lot of houses around those parts, we only had about a four-foot clearance between the dirt floor and the first-floor rafters. There was no electricity down there, either. Every time we used to go down to tend the wood-

furnace, it was always a two-man, or man-and-a-boy, or if I was lucky enough to grab ahold of one of my young brothers, a boy-and-a-boy operation (until we got the new furnace, you couldn't have paid my mother to go down into that place, cold house or not, day-time or night, summer or winter), because somebody had to hold the lantern. Day or night, it was always dark as a well-digger's pocket down there.

One of us would hold the lantern while the other fellow stumbled around, groping for logs that were tangled in a disordered heap under the window where we used to fling the sawed-up chunks of firewood down from the pile in the yard. My father always reminded us to do this at least six times a day in the winter, and with hopes that some day, by some miracle, we'd have a supply stored up in advance.

Once when he was away on a trip, I can remember him calling up long-distance and telling my mother to see that we threw some wood down into the cellar.

The way it usually worked out was that the best logs that fitted the old firebox got used up about as fast as we could throw new ones down. Those we culled out stayed on the bottom, or ended up there (there's plenty of them still there). So, every time we needed to build up the fire, the one getting the wood had to crawl over a couple of feet of poor stuff to find the good logs. With the low rafters, ready to crack you on the head the first time you tried to stand up straight, all of us (including my father) always tried to find some excuse to hold the lantern. My father usually won out by claiming that the wick wasn't trimmed right and he'd be careful with it so as not to cause a fire.

As you might guess, that crawling job got to be more and more mine. And, although I

never went ahead and did it, I'm willing to bet that if you checked into it like I always wanted to, you would have found the edges of those oak timbers worn smooth by my head. One of the arguments that my father used to start out with was that kids should go in after the wood because they were small enough to get around easily on the woodpile. This should have nominated my smaller brothers for the job. But they always complained that they weren't strong enough to handle those heavy pieces that burned so well.

Besides, my brothers learned to disappear when they figured it was time for that job to be done. Somehow, they could team up and signal each other when one of them noticed that certain gleam coming into my father's eyes. Anyhow, it got so my father gave up trying to use sensible arguments, the older we all got. He would just order me to get at it and get it over with.

We never could see much further than the weak glow of the lantern. But one thing my brothers and I knew from our explorations was that there were plenty of old barrels, boxes, baskets, and dozens and dozens of pails and buckets down under that house.

I forgot to mention that the house had once been a thriving coal factory. No doubt that's where all those pails and buckets came from. In fact, the business thrived so much its owners flooded the market, then went bankrupt. And speaking of flooding reminds me of what a good deal of all this is about.



The new coal burner arrived all packaged up nice and snug, with little bits of excelsior sticking out all around here and there, and a few shiny parts gleaming. Although I thought it was fairly nice looking at the time, I can't help remembering it now as some kind of mischievous monster, just biding its time before lowering the sword of doom on all of us, but likely with its eye on me in particular. Instead of a sword, though, it started with an axe.

"A beauty," said my father, gazing in admiration and awe for a second or two. Then, being a man of action, if not one of skill in those matters, he proceeded to try to uncrate it on the spot. What he didn't know was that the company had nailed that crate

up a lot tighter than some of the houses around there.

The half of an old hammer he was using wasn't enough for the job. He grabbed a rusty axe we had around the place, and without taking time to aim, let go with a swing that would have sent the crate and its contents clear to the Canadian Border — if he'd connected. Which he didn't.

The axe-head, being loose, flew off and went whizzing over the top of a good sized tree before it crash-landed right in the middle of our neighbor's hip-roof. Lucky it wasn't a sharp axe. Otherwise, it might have ripped right through and maybe killed somebody inside.

As it was, it only tore off about two feet of wooden shingles before it glanced off. Shingles were fluttering around the neighbor's house as the axe-head sailed down, hitting the tin hood of an old Dodge truck that was parked there beside the house. It probably landed cutting edge first, because it sliced right on into the innards of that poor old truck. And on that one-in-a-million chance, the axe-head made some kind of a connection for the starter, and the truck just happened to be in gear.

First thing we knew, the truck was groaning and jerking its way toward the middle of the road, but before it got there, it turned and lurched toward our front door. That battery must have been charged up to the hilt, too, because I saw the determined way it pushed over a whole row of shrubs my mother had planted not two years before. One right after the other, it just kept on pushing its way across the lawn.

All seven of the neighbor-kids rushed out and started to chase the truck, yelling and screaming like a pack of wild Indians. An old fellow, the great-great-grandfather of the whole bunch, I think, who lived with them, skittered out, pulling at his beard; and stood there staring at the roof. For years he swore that lightning struck that house right in the middle of a bright fall afternoon. And I don't think he ever figured out the connection between what had happened on the roof and the truck that was killing its battery as it struggled to climb the big, flat stone steps to our front door.

Funny thing about all this was that my father didn't even notice all the commotion. After tossing away the useless axe-handle, being the man of purpose that he was, he'd hurried into the shed to look for a sledge-

hammer. And it's lucky for him that he had that sixteen-pounder in his hands when the big, burly neighbor — a wood chopper by trade, when he wasn't wrestling for the fun of it — came tearing up into our back yard to see what he could do about putting a stop to whatever was going on. With something like a week's beard on his face; straight black hair sticking out all over his head, without the greasy touque he always wore to keep it down; fire-red suspenders over a black and gray checkered wool shirt, he made a fearsome figure, bare feet and all.

Mad as a hornet, he kept rumpling up his hair and looking around wild and sort of perplexed about what to do next. Every once in awhile, he'd make a swipe at one of his nearest kids; but he kept missing, either because he was so excited, or because the kids had a lot of practice staying out of his reach. If he'd caught one, I'm sure he would have whaled the daylights out of him just on general principles to make himself feel better.

After he roared to all of them to shut up a few times, they did, and disappeared into their house. Then he and my father went at it hot and heavy. The funny part was that neither one of them knew what to start off with and they kept making false stabs like, "What's the idea of stealing my truck?", or "Keep your kids to home, I'm busy!". And after starting all that trouble, the new coal-burner proved to be the peace-maker at that point.

The two men got to looking it over and, together had it uncrated in a matter of minutes. And at last, and finally, it was ready for the basement. The only trouble was, the basement wasn't ready for it. Getting the old wood-burner out was a job my father hadn't thought about when he uncrated the new one.

This didn't stop him from showing the thing off to all the folks around there, though. Until almost pitch-dark that night, there they all stood admiring the contraption, rubbing the shiny parts, fiddling with the automatic damper, and generally marvelling at the progress of the times. When my father finally went in for supper, he left me out there standing guard to see that nobody harmed the thing; and I could hear him, from way out in the yard, hollering into the telephone long distance to the next big town, ordering a big load of coal.

Well, two days later, the old furnace was in

the trash heap behind the barn, and a small mountain of coal took up a good third of the back yard. Also, we had a couple of men there ready to help install the new furnace.

I forgot to say that it looked like rain the first night the new burner was out in the yard, and it did rain the second. It was my job to keep it covered with bits of canvas and old burlap bags. I used up half my mother's safety pins trying to make a cover that I could peg to the ground, but every time a little breeze came up, there she'd be — our prized beauty, ready to rust at a moment's notice. And that was usually when my father would call me and tell me to get out there and do the job right.

After a lot of struggling, the two men, my father, and I (my brothers had disappeared) got the clumsy thing down the cellar-way and started to inch it toward the chimney-base where the old one had been. Something strange happened right there. The ceiling of the cellar being so low, there wasn't room for the new furnace to fit into place. It was either rip out the rafters or dig a pit. Rather than have the house fall down, my father decided on the pit, and the two men went right to work.

I was assigned the job of hauling the dirt out in buckets, and having so many buckets handy was no advantage as far as I was concerned. The men could fill up a dozen or two by the time I had made one round-trip. Another nuisance to contend with was that the handles on the buckets, being rusted some, broke off, one by one.

Along about evening time, I noticed that the pails of dirt were getting heavier and heavier. And sure enough, on one trip it wasn't dirt at all — just plain mud. In a little while, it was so thin you could have called it water. We'd hit one of those famous springs, all right; and the pit was half-filled with water, enough to drown the two men, when they quit in disgust.

My father refused to pay until the job was done, and agreed on an hourly rate. So, grumbling a bit about what they'd let themselves into, they were back the next day (which, happily for me, was a school day, and I was never so happy to go to school in my life). All day long I kept seeing that sloshing mess in that pit, and all day long I was as good as gold.

My behavior surprised my teacher so

much she even went so far as to say that she thought at last I'd changed for the better, and she hoped the improvement would last. Little did she know that I would have gone to school on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, if the law allowed, just to get away from that pit and that new furnace. But, it wasn't going to be that easy. I didn't even go to school on days that the law required, for a little while, all because of that modern convenience.

The way it happened was, the next morning, my father called me as soon as it was daylight, handed me a couple of pails with handles, and suggested that I get started. Then he disappeared somewhere, leaving me all alone bailing out that place until it was finally down to rock bottom. I figured I was finished, went upstairs to breakfast, then off to wonderful school. As I walked out of the yard, the men were coming in to connect up the furnace and try it out.

Happily eating lunch in school and pretending that everything was all right with everything all over the world, I was rudely awakened to the truth of it all. My father was there calling for me and my two brothers.

The stubborn pit was half-filled with water again and the men couldn't finish the job of hooking up the furnace. It was early fall, and you can imagine how anxious my father was to get that heating system working.

This time we all got together, father, brothers, and even my mother pitched in; we had the cellar bailed out in less than an hour. Then, the men, stepping real dainty through the mud, finished their work and cleared out in time for the concrete experts who were going to wall the place off and maybe stop the water.

One thing to celebrate (or so we thought at the time) was the fact that the new furnace did light all right; and once more we had that parade of admiring spectators coming through to see how much heat it threw, and all that. Everybody agreed that it was as modern as you could get and figured that the day of the wood stove was at an end. That is, until the water began to creep up around the firebox.

I was just trying to sneak off to school again when my father called me. All I did was grab a couple of buckets and run down and start bailing. After encouraging me a little, everybody disappeared and left me bailing for all I was worth. Well, I never got back to

school that day, for which my father dutifully wrote an excuse as follows: "Emergency. Raymond needed to bail furnace out."

From then on, it was a constant struggle between me and the water and the fire that had to be kept going at all costs. The nice new concrete wall and floor, and tidy little step down into the pit did nothing to keep the infernal water out. That's where I learned how fast water will pour through concrete, and to this day, I refuse to live in a house with a cellar. My ranch-house is all *above* ground and I can tell you I plan to keep it that way.

On top of everything else, as I mentioned before, nobody knew what a coal fire was supposed to look like. The only one in town who supposedly knew all about it was the janitor for the high school. He was a nice old codger, but he didn't talk much. In fact, all he did was look around, nod his head, and say that the fire was building up fine. Then, he would go home with the advice, "When the fire is just right, all you have to do is turn off the upper damper," or some such instructions, never telling me what "just right" was, nor advising me on how you turn a damper off. For all I knew, I could have been turning it on, or leaving it part-way open, or closed, or some other way totally confusing to the modern "automatic" furnace of ours.

Since the janitor was so little help to me, even if he meant well, I decided to experiment for myself. Nobody else in the house seemed to care as long as the place was warm. So, after about the fifth visit by the old janitor (who was getting tired of walking over to check on me) I figured it wouldn't hurt to help the fire along. Kerosene seemed to be the logical method.

You can't blame me for that because the fire looked awfully dead and cold. No matter how much coal I threw on it, the worse it got.

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Last month's **Can You Place It?** showed the Buckfield railroad bridge immediately following its collapse on April 27, 1869. The bridge, situated just below the village, gave

way without warning under the weight of a Mechanic Falls-bound train, plunging the engine, tender, and first car loaded with wood into the Nezinscott River.



There were no serious injuries.

The bridge belonged to the newly-created Buckfield Railroad Company which operated as part of the now defunct Portland and

Oxford Central Railroad linking Mechanic Falls with Canton.

The picture was printed via the courtesy of Gilbert Tilton of Buckfield.



I went out to the kerosene drum in the back of the house and filled a two-quart pail with the stuff. Then I went down to that furnace, sloshed through the water that was creeping up again, swung the door of the firebox open, and splashed all that kerosene onto the whole mess, pail and all. For a minute I wasn't sure what happened.

There was a kind of a "WHOOOoosh!" and a big puff of black smoke. The flames roared up real lively, I noticed, as I gasped my way out the cellar door, reaching as hard as I could for some air. Air?

It was hair, and eye-brows, and eye-lashes, and a new shirt that I needed most; plus plenty of soap and water. But the fire was roaring the way our old wood-furnace used to. I could tell, because flames were shooting out of the chimney. Guessing that it was "just right," at last, I hurried down to shut the damper the way the janitor told me.

By that time, the water was creeping up around the bottom of the firebox and the whole family and most of the neighbors were in the yard. I tell you, we had so many visitors during those early days with that furnace that our grass never grew in right again, from all that tramping around. But our fancy lawn is another story I can tell you some other time.

Everybody was worried about the flames and black smoke pouring out the chimney and somebody rang up the fire station. I could hear the siren going it wild down at the village, calling all the volunteers in to fight the fire at our house. By the time they got there, of course, the kerosene had burned off, and coal fire looked as dead as ever. But I was so busy bailing that I scarcely had time to notice. Everybody stepped aside nicely to let me pass to dump the water. When I suggested that there were plenty of pails down there in case anybody wanted to help, it appeared that they all suddenly became hard of hearing. That is, all except one young volunteer fireman.

He had been inspecting our pile of coal with a professional eye. "Your coal is all wet," he told me, speaking as though he knew it all. "Try drying it before you burn it."

"That's a good idea, Raymond," my father chimed in, suddenly hearing all right.

"Dry off a couple of buckets of coal in back of the kitchen stove (a wood-burner)," he said, "and see if it don't burn better."

So, from that time on, I had a new job of drying the coal before I burned it. The

system for running that new furnace was getting to be so complicated I could hardly remember which step came first in the whole procedure. But I kept bailing just the same, hoping I could get back to school someday.

It went on like that all winter, and the rest of the winters I was home. Sure, I learned a few tricks, such as not expecting the coal fire to flame like a decent fire ought to. Like closing the damper when the bed is just right. Like sifting the clinkers out of the ashes and using them to get my new fire going. And a lot of others. But I didn't like it one bit, especially the bailing part.

After a while I did finally get a system worked out, and did go back to school, which had suddenly turned out to be such a pleasure. It was bailing in the morning, then building up the fire. Bailing at noon, then, after bailing once more at night, building up the fire again, and settling the house to rights for the night. If I bailed late at night, I didn't have to get up until sun-up to catch the water before it flooded the fire out. And this was seven days a week!

Being a church-goer, I had to have a system for Sundays, too. I never knew again what it was to sleep until seven o'clock in the morning until I got to college, which wasn't any too soon for me. I guess I don't have to tell you that army life, after I was drafted, was a cinch, too.

In due time, my hair, eye-brows, and eye-lashes grew back in, and there were times when I almost forgot my awful responsibilities around that furnace. But, not quite; that is, until almost five years later, when I left the job to my two brothers.

Trouble was, those brothers of mine were a lot smarter than I was, even though neither one of them bothered with college. First thing they did when they inherited my old job was to talk my father into wiring up electricity in the basement. Then they went out and bought a heavy-duty sump-pump, and charged it to him. Still modern and

NO RUMOR

A newspaper woman named Bloomer
Was hot on the trail of Maine humor
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To say something funny,
To prove native wit was no rumor.

P.W.G.

progressive, my father fell for it right away when he saw it.

The sump-pump worked fine. My brothers even wrote me long letters about it, not knowing that the thought of that beast in the basement sent cold shivers up and down my neck.

The new electrical-mechanical arrangement worked like a charm. Kept right ahead of the water all the time. Never any need to bail. And, of all things, they even went so far as to install an automatic stoker for that furnace, just before they switched to oil heat. Those brothers of mine sure got away with murder with my father's checkbook, being smart enough to capitalize on his interest in new ideas.

What made me so mad was the fact that I never thought of those things. All they had to do was turn on the gadgets and let her rip.

They never cared what a coal fire was supposed to look like; and one time, I heard that the old janitor asked *them* to come to the school to give *him* some advice. The worst

part of it all is that the house was always warmer by their methods than it had been by mine. I guess I was just too darned conscientious.

But, just to show how a thing like a furnace can keep a grudge, I was home on a visit a couple of years ago and went down to see the brute. The light bulb over the pit was either missing or blown out. Or maybe that blamed furnace went so far as to switch it out on me on purpose.

Whatever the case, as I walked toward the pit, fishing for a match, I walloped my head on a post — one that I must have forgotten in the years that I'd been away. The blow almost knocked me flat. And without trying to collect my wits, I crawled back up those stairs and haven't tried to see that furnace since. If you can't lick a thing like that, you might as well quit.

Stone is a retired college professor living in Locke Mills.

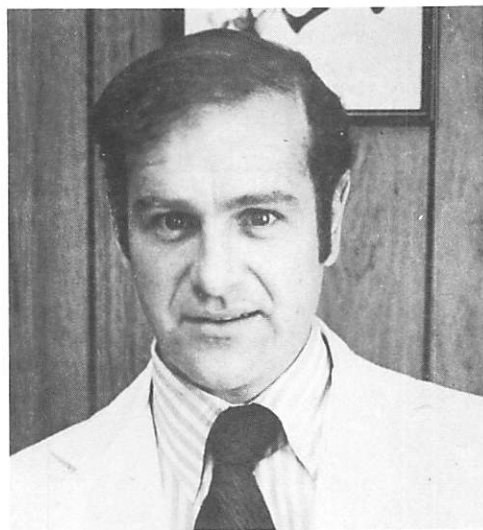


Rounds store, the village green, Waterford

Medicine For the Hills

Consumerism In Medicine

by Michael A. Lacombe, M.D.



Dr. Michael Lacombe

HOW TO DROP DEAD

Case report: J. G. R. was a forty-five-year-old, happily married, successful businessman. He played tennis twice a week, split his own wood and, people said, looked closer to thirty than fifty. Physically fit, not an ounce of fat — he'd live forever. He believed it. During a doubles match an intense "gas" pain in the pit of his stomach brought on a cold sweat and stoppage of play.

"God damn martinis. Probably an ulcer. Better see the doc in the morning," he thought to himself.

He died before morning.

Case report: S. B. A. was a trim, active, thirty-eight-year-old teacher. She had been on and off "the pill" for eleven years. Her father had had a heart attack and died at age

forty-nine. Two of his brothers died suddenly in their forties. But heart disease was a man's problem and was of no concern to her.

S. B. A.'s triglycerides were 1240 mg. per cent. She was unaware of that, as was her doctor, who dutifully prescribed the pill each year after the ritualistic Pap smear. Heart attacks, after all, don't happen to pretty young women.

S. B. A. began jogging to shed five pounds and was found dead on the roadside.

Case report: R. W. H. was fifty-five. He had had his heart attack — three years ago. After three weeks in the hospital, blood pressure pills for awhile, and six months of doctor's visits, he was "cured," he thought.

There were no new problems until two weeks ago when, with any exertion at all, the left side of his neck began to ache. Then the least little thing brought on the pain. He thought he'd pulled a muscle. His wife found him dead in bed.

Ignorance is Death

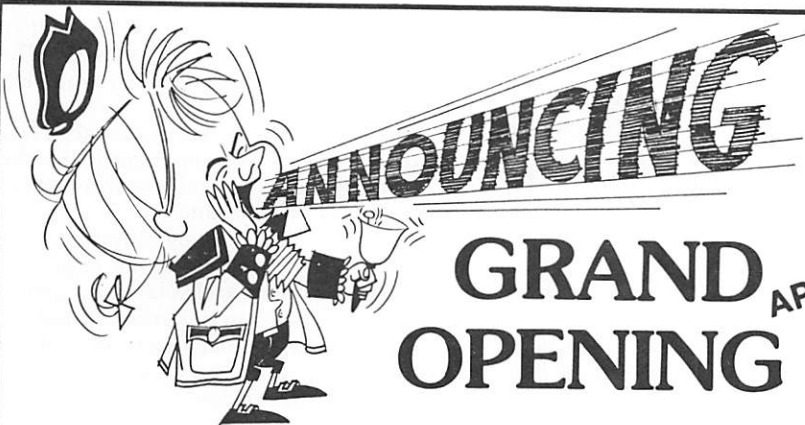
Old age is not a prerequisite for a heart attack, but ignorance will usually result in death from one. About one-half of all deaths from heart attack (*myocardial infarction*) occur within the first two hours and fifteen minutes of onset of the attack. Three-fourths of all deaths occur within the first twenty-four hours of the onset.

Most of these deaths are preventable. People die because they fail to recognize symptoms and because they deny the symptoms' significance.

In the months ahead, I will be discussing, among other topics in this column, diet, exercise and high blood pressure as they relate to heart disease. I'll be trying to make some sense out of the cholesterol and triglyceride issue.

But for now some common ground is needed — a point of reference for discussion. I want to focus on what a heart attack is and how to recognize an attack, should it occur. You need to be convinced that heart attacks are not necessarily an end to life; that too many people die needlessly from them and that you can and should be able to diagnose an attack should it occur. I would then ask you to save this article for future reference. We tend to forget about things that don't happen to us.

Too many of us tend to think of the heart



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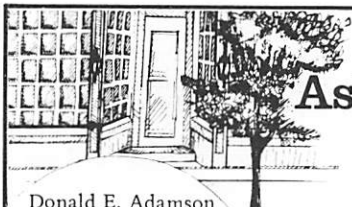
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in mechanical terms: "The heart is a pump... the old ticker... he had a plugged valve..."

We liken the heart to a Rolls Royce with a lifetime guarantee; and when we neglect it, and it falters, somehow we feel cheated.

Your heart is alive, just as much flesh and blood as your nose or your big toe, and it deserves every bit as much consideration. To keep it alive and doing its job, three arteries coursing along its surface (the coronary arteries) supply the heart with oxygen and nutrients. Life depends upon all three arteries. Unfortunately, there is no emergency back-up system. That's the way things were designed, and we have to live with it.

When one of these arteries, or a branch of one, becomes plugged, a portion of the heart doesn't get its requisite blood supply. Its misfortune is announced in a number of ways. The plugging causes pain. The heart will not beat and pump properly; and, more importantly, it becomes quite irritable and discharges electrical impulses which affect its rhythmicity.

These impulses jam the transmission of healthy signals, which normally pace the heart. The entire heart muscle, instead of pumping in concerted effort, twitches ineffectually. This random twitching of the heart, called *ventricular fibrillation*, fails to pump any blood at all, and the brain, deprived of oxygen, dies within four minutes.

These irritable electrical impulses occur primarily during the first twenty-four hours of a heart attack. The fibrillation which ensues is the cause of sudden death during that period of time.

The degree of irritability does not depend upon the amount of heart muscle damaged; a minuscule portion of irritable muscle can trigger fibrillation and kill. The irritability can easily be quieted with drugs; the twitching can be converted to normal pumping again with an electrical shock to the chest. That's why there are intensive care units with heart monitors watching electrical impulses, and nurses trained to read them. The trick is to get the person with a fresh, new heart attack, into an intensive care unit before ventricular fibrillation kills him.

Gradual Process

Usually a coronary artery does not become plugged all at once. The narrowing is a gradual process. When the narrowing

becomes severe, the supply of blood and oxygen to the heart cannot increase when the heart is asked to increase its work. The result is pain during exertion. We call that *angina*.

Angina is relieved by rest, lasts only a few minutes, and involves no damage to the heart. People with known heart disease live for years with daily angina.

The appearance of new angina, or a change in the pattern of existing angina (it being provoked more easily, lasting a longer period of time, or occurring more often) is a warning that critical changes are taking place in a coronary artery. To ignore the warning is to risk sudden death.

Angina, or heart pain, is felt as pain, not "in the heart," but elsewhere. It can be felt centrally in the chest, or in the neck, or in the jaw only, or down one arm (usually the left), or in the wrist, or in the back. If a person tells me about left arm pain while climbing stairs, I begin to worry about angina. The pain is usually dull, steady and deep; it is seldom stabbing or sharp. It has been likened to a tightening, a pressure, or a weight on the chest, or to a dull, steady "gas" pain. Angina may be indistinguishable from a feeling of indigestion. It can be brought on by cold weather and by emotion, as well as by exertion.

A heart attack occurs when a coronary artery becomes totally plugged. The pain of a heart attack is similar in type to that of angina, but more severe and it persists much longer. The pain is very intense and very frightening; a victim may commonly sense impending doom.

It is incredible that a person can endure such an experience and yet, after the pain leaves, ignore its possible significance. Yet, too many people do just that. It is incredible, too, that antacids are often prescribed over the phone, time and time again, when a person complains of severe, dull, gas pains in the pit of his stomach.

People are lost to us forever when they ignore, minimize or fail to act upon the symptoms of heart disease. Education is the only way to save them. That is the purpose of these articles.

You need to be more responsible for your own well-being and for that of those around you. You will never be criticized for insisting that someone with severe chest discomfort seek prompt medical attention. You might save a life.

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Making It

Vicki Jackson's Dough Art

A dozen years ago Vicki and Norman Jackson fell in love on the Amazon River in steamy Brazil—Ticuna Indians and missionary zeal their common bond.

Now, like a field of wildflowers, that love has grown and spread, encompassing not only the children they now have but a whole community. Here in Maine is where their dreams are coming true, on a plot of land in North Norway once called, ironically, "Little South America."

Calm, blue-eyed Vicki uses her kitchen as a "dough art" studio. She sculpts the dough into shapes of animals, flowers and children, then bakes them to a lasting finish. They are then glued onto stained wooden plaques which her husband has made, and these she exhibits and sells at fairs and through stores

such as Larstorps in Norway and Oxford Yankee Workshop on Route 26 in Oxford. One-of-a-kind designs also come easily to her for those customers who have a special idea in mind.

Norman is an Independent Fundamentalist minister who preaches and holds Sunday School classes in the basement of their home while he is in the process of building a Christian day school on his property, incorporated as the Northwoods Christian Center.

He and Vicki met at Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, where they attended classes and worked part time, she as a nurse and he as an ambulance driver. At that time, both planned to be missionaries and it was through Gospel Fellowship

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BESSEY MOTOR SALES



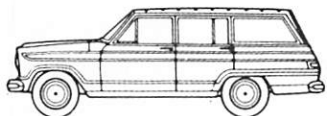
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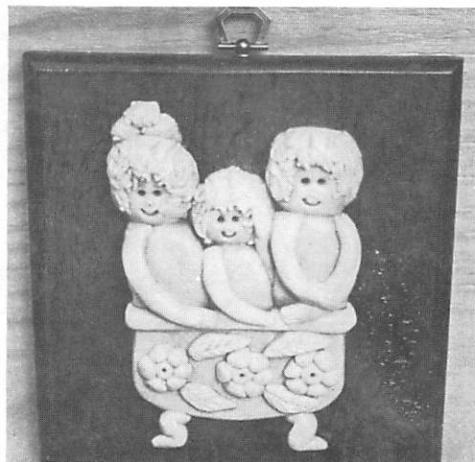
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Vicki Jackson at work (above) and a finished creation (right) — a completed dough art work



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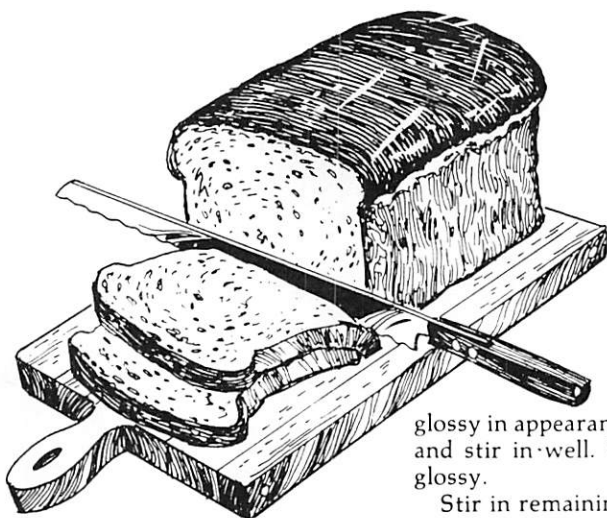
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Homemade



Preparation of the legendary Finnish bread is a labor of love, requiring every ounce of *sisu* (that special Finnish blend of stamina, stubbornness and perseverance) that any Finn or non-Finn is able to muster.

But, anyone who has been lucky enough to sample a selection of the moist, golden bread will agree that the discipline pays off in the end product.

The following recipe comes from Hugo Heikkinen of West Paris, who cautions cooks to carefully observe the order of combining ingredients in order to avoid disaster.

Ingredients:

- 1 pkg. active dry yeast
- ½ cup warm water
- 2 cups milk, scalded and cooled to lukewarm
- 1 cup (or less) sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 7-8 cardamom seeds, seeded & crushed
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 8-9 cups sifted flour
- ½ cup melted butter

Dissolve yeast in warm water. Stir in milk, sugar, salt, cardamom seeds, eggs and enough flour to make a batter (about 2 cups). Beat until dough is smooth and elastic.

Add about three cups of flour and beat well. (The dough should be quite smooth and

glossy in appearance). Add the melted butter and stir in well. Beat again until dough is glossy.

Stir in remaining flour until a stiff dough forms.

Turn out onto a lightly floured board and cover with an inverted mixing bowl. Let the dough rest for 15 minutes. Knead until smooth and satiny.

Place the dough in a lightly greased mixing bowl and turn to grease the top. Cover lightly and let rise in a warm place (85 degrees) until doubled in bulk (about 1 hour). Punch down and let rise again until almost doubled (another 30 minutes).

Turn out again onto a slightly floured board. Divide into three large parts, then divide each of these parts into three sections. Shape each section into a strip measuring about 16 inches long, rolling the dough between the hands and the board.

Braid the three strips into a straight loaf. Pinch the ends together and tuck under. Repeat for second and third loaves.

Lift the braids onto lightly greased baking sheets. Let rise for about 20 minutes. (The braids should be puffy but not doubled in size).

Glaze the loaves with beaten eggs and, if you wish, sprinkle with sugar.

Bake in a hot oven (400 degrees) 25 or 30 minutes. Do not overbake or loaves will be too dry. Remove from oven when a light golden brown.

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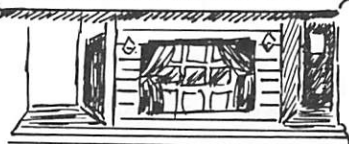
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...page 9

Actually, Buzz said that after watching, spellbound, while I found out what getting fired from a slingshot directly into a concrete wall might feel like.

A spot about two miles below Greenwood, at the foot of a high bank, marks the put-in area for open canoes.

"There's some pretty big waterfalls above there," a West Paris native once noted.

The veteran whitewater paddler may note that I've made no attempt to classify these rivers according to the international rating scale of class *one through six* (easiest to hardest). Suffice it to say that many of these pitches tear along at a good class five, and a paddler who makes too many mistakes is probably going to feel his teeth biting the back of his throat.

I've probably made kayaking sound like it should be placed among such other well-known sports as rhinoceros-roping and Great White Shark-spearing. Not So. Competent kayakers gain their skills during timeless hours of practice and analyzing whitewater. Everyone wears helmets, high-flotation life jackets, and wet suits in season. And nobody with the brains of a good-sized gopher runs wild rivers alone.

An appreciation for the ludicrous is a handy item, too. That enables you to stand in a laundromat enthusing about "That Great Run" while Dave plugs more dimes into the dryer so you can both gain just a little more body heat by pressing against the machine.

Or, like Buzz, jog 18 miles along a goat-track of a road in order to get the van back to where you lifted the kayaks out of the river.

And, if you are really bent on immortality, you can try to figure a way to mount that ejection seat for emergency escapes. But, if I can ever devise a way to keep from blasting myself straight into the riverbed, I'll already have the patent.

EXPLORING

An adventuresome fellow named Dave
Went exploring one day in a cave
In spite of his care,
He fell over a bear
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Editor

1. There are five houses, each of a different color and inhabited by men of different nationalities, with different pets, drinks and cigarettes.
2. The Englishman lives in the red house.
3. The Spaniard owns the dog.
4. Coffee is drunk in the green house.
5. The Ukrainian drinks tea.
6. The green house is immediately to the right (your right) of the ivory house.
7. The Old Gold Smoker owns snails.
8. Kools are smoked in the yellow house.
9. Milk is drunk in the middle house.
10. The Norwegian lives in the first house on the left.
11. The man who smokes Chesterfields lives in the house next to the man with the fox.
12. Kools are smoked in the house next to the house where the horse is.
13. The Lucky Strike smoker drinks orange juice.
14. The Japanese smokes Parliaments.
15. The Norwegian lives next to the blue house.

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For Sale: Lightly wooded lot on East Oxford Road in South Paris. Approximately 100 ft. x 300 ft. Price \$2000, firm. Call 539-2242.

For Sale: 16 Silver Spangled Hamburg Hens and 1 Rooster for \$35. Call 539-2242.

For Sale: 1965 Corvair - almost new motor, needs body work. Write **BitterSweet**, Box 301, Oxford, Me. 04270.

For Sale: One antique couch, newly upholstered. Excellent condition. \$75. Call 539-2515.

For Sale: Piney woods with old sap orchard abutting camp woodlands, Bridgton. Chance for several lots. William C. Gray, RFD 2 Call 647-2208.

For Sale or Trade: Large, complete wood-burning furnace; best offer. Write **BitterSweet**, Box 301, Oxford, Me. 04270.

Dishes Wanted: Will buy odd pieces of Fiesta ware; write Flynn, RFD 1, Buckfield.

For Sale: (53"x53") framed painting in variety of mediums - full-sized peacock, with lifelike "fan of feathers." The peacock is the ancient symbol of Eternal Life. Contact Georgia S. Robertson. Call 207-336-2963.

Bike for Sale: Vista 10-speed bike with odometer. Excellent condition. \$60 firm. Call or write Cathy Flynn, RFD 1, Box 37A, Buckfield. Call 336-2018.

For Sale: 2 bedroom ranch with separate garage, 1 acre more or less, near Norway Country Club. Asking \$24,500. Call 743-7763 any time.

SEND YOUR "FOR SALE" ITEM TO: Peddler Page, BitterSweet Magazine, One Madison Avenue, Oxford, Me. 04270. If accepted, it will be printed free of charge in the next month's issue. We do not acknowledge or return any copy. Each month we will draw at random 40 "for sale" items. This will be an editorial column and not advertising, thus we reserve the right to change wording or consider any "for sale" item unacceptable.

BitterSweet will not be held responsible for any unethical or unfair dealings which are violations of the Postal Regulations and will be dealt with as such. All sales are final between buyer and seller only.

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Goings On



MUSIC

THE BATES COLLEGE STRING QUARTET WITH JOHN McLAREN, guitarist: April 8, 8 p.m., Hebron Academy's Halford Lounge; tickets available at the door.

OXFORD HILLS HIGH SCHOOL, JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL & ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BAND JAMBOREE: April 17, high school gymnasium, 7:30 p.m.

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(See Reverse Side)

MARY DAVENPORT, contralto: Bates College Lounge, Wednesday, May 10, 8 p.m., Free Admission.

LONGSTRETH & ESCOSA, duo harpists: Lewiston Junior High School Auditorium, Fri. April 28, 8 p.m., part of the Community Concert Series.

JOHN & MARGUERITE McLAREN: at the First Congregational Church, South Paris, Sat. April 15, 7:30 p.m., a Fine Arts Series production. Free Admission.

ART

STUDENT EXHIBIT at Hebron Academy's Hupper Gallery through April 8; JON BROOKS (carved wood furniture) and MONA BROOKS (clay sculpture) April 9 - May 6; DENNIS DREHER (geometric painting and sculpture) May 7 - May 27. Gallery hours: Weekdays 9-5/ Sun. 2-5 p.m.

THEATRE

WAITING FOR GODOT by SAMUEL BECKETT: at the Profile Theatre, 15 Temple Street, Portland, through April 16. Performances Thurs.-Sat., 8 p.m. For reservations, call 774-0465.

PILLARS OF SOCIETY by HENRIK IBSEN: excerpts directed by Nancy Marcotte, April 7-8, 7:30 p.m., South Paris Congregational Church, a Fine Arts Series production. Free Admission.

ETC.

OXFORD HILLS HIGH SCHOOL KIDDY CARNIVAL: high school cafeteria, 1-4 p.m., April 29.

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S EDUCATION & RESEARCH COMMITTEE presents a program entitled, "Bethel and World War I," April 6, 7:30 p.m. at the Moses Mason House Museum.

SPECIALS

TO LAUGH, PERCHANCE TO DREAM: Theatre at Monmouth's first-ever spring tour; performances and workshop bookings available, with special Shakespearean Study Guides, April 1 - May 31. Booking fees are negotiable. For information, call (207) 782-9784 or write Theatre at Monmouth, General Offices, 124 Lisbon Street, P. O. Drawer 3047, Lewiston, Me 04240.

WEST PARIS MINSTREL SHOW: April 14 & 15, at the West Paris School Gymnasium, sponsored by the Universalist Church Forward Foundation.

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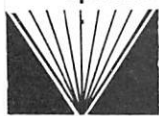
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You Don't Say

Fella went ice fishing on Thompson Lake the other day with two friends. Not wanting to make the journey from icy water to bucket difficult for any toad, bass or salmon that might find its way to his line, he cut his ice hole extra large, then proceeded to fall in.

His horrified companions stood there with mouths agape, waiting for him to reappear. He didn't. Just as they were reaching the conclusion that he was drowning in the freezing water and wouldn't be found til spring, they heard a scream from an ice hut 20 feet away and looked over just in time to see the hut's owner burst out of his door like a man possessed, eyes bulging and face as white as snow.

Their dripping-wet friend ran out likewise, having popped up out of the hut's ice hole like a cork from a bottle. The hut's startled occupant never did stop to find out whether it was a merman or a cousin to the Loch Ness monster following him. He was last seen tearing across the lake on his snowmobile and never even came back for his bucket of fish.

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Missions that they went to Brazil to help set up a school, church and clinic.

Norman grew up in the Oxford Hills area and eventually, after a year in California, he and Vicki were led to return here, moving into the parsonage of the Calvary Community Church in Harrison for three years while he served as pastor (moonlighting as a carpenter), and Vicki worked part-time as a nurse in Bridgton. They also ran a religious bookstore, the "Colonial Bible House", in South Paris for awhile.

It was in Harrison that Norman became active with the youth of the area and soon formed the idea of opening his own school. He was gaining practical experience in construction work, as well, which he is now



Completed dough art work

putting to use as he works fulltime on the day school building, with the help of Leroy Zutter. Leroy, with his wife, Diane, a kindergarten teacher, will share in the responsibility of this project. The Zutters are old friends from California and are on the Center's board of directors.

Target date for completion of the school is June first. Eventually all grades from kindergarten through high school will be taught there but in the beginning there will be elementary grades and summer camping sessions. As a boy, Norman loved the

page 50...



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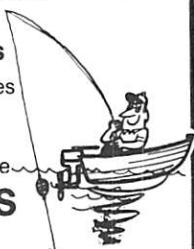
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Sweet Finds

Because of the rising demand for firewood, the Maine Audubon Society has begun a wood fuel program in order to promote proper management of firewood resources and ensure their long-term availability.

As a way of directly assisting private woodlot owners in managing their land for small scale firewood production, the society has made six firewood specialists available in southern Maine.

Oxford County's specialist is Walter Suomela of Norway. Suomela will offer advice on how best to harvest firewood to meet home heating needs. He will help select trees which ought to be removed from the woodlot and burned as fuel, and will suggest ways to stretch that fuel the farthest.

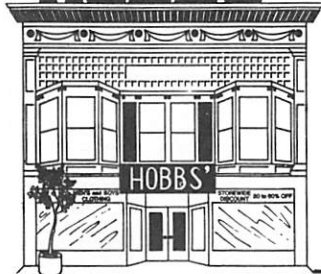
Suomela may be reached at 743-6819. There is a \$5 fee for his services.

The counseling program is part of a four-part project designed to assess the supply, demand and marketability of firewood. The project, which will be completed next September, includes, in addition to the firewood specialists' service, a statewide survey to gauge the present and projected demand for firewood; investigation of existing sources of firewood and current methods of wood harvesting; and research on firewood marketing options.

At its completion, the program will publish a breakdown of the quantity and types of firewood presently used throughout Maine; an estimate of future firewood demand; analysis of consumer know-how on using firewood and wood stoves; and assessment of firewood supply versus consumer demand.

There will be an in-depth study released on forest management practices of woodland owners in Oxford County, as well as York, Androscoggin, Sagadahoc and Kennebec counties; along with various education-oriented publications directed at consumers and harvesters of firewood.

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...page 21

hanging, tail-wagging, flea-scratching, head-cocking, panting, licking, salami-eyed lovable appeal.

By the end of April, members of the ensemble will have completed their circuit up through the northern states and be home again in South Paris, where Tony will let them catch their breath for a minute and a half, before easing them into rehearsals of Ghelderode's humorous/serious fantasy about Christopher Columbus.

Summer will bring workshops in mime and improvisational theatre, and those exciting weekend performances which even the fireflies and the resident cat can't stay away from.

Help for non-readers

Last fall, state funding through the PROP Agency started a free and confidential service for educating Cumberland County adults with reading deficiencies.

People with reading problems come in all socioeconomic ranges, according to program directors. Even with a low-pressure, specialized, one-to-one service, many of the non-readers may find it too embarrassing to seek their help.

Stephanie Bearse of PROP began by focusing on adult reading skills, and then expanded the program to include instruction on telling time, writing, and, most recently, English as a second language.

A survey conducted of the S.A.D. 61 area found 15 to 20% of the adults to have a reading skill problem based on previous schooling, according to PROP personnel. Ten students are now being tutored free of charge in their homes.

The agency hopes to, at some point, become affiliated with The Literacy Volunteers of America, an organization offering workshops and learning equipment that would be a bonus to those learning reading through PROP.



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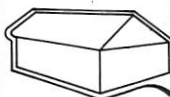
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Ayah

We consider your comments and suggestions an important means of discovering our readers' interests. Representative and appropriate letters will be published as space allows. Most likely answers won't be necessary, and probably the only response you'll receive will be a most appropriate "Ayah!"

IN AGREEMENT

At last you have a subscriber who thinks as I do. Mr. Walker's poem is one with some sense. Maybe not as famous poets would write, but one that can be understood by all ages. I shall write and hope to see more of his poems.

I have been so pleased with **BitterSweet** for it is a business I always wanted to do.

I hear many people say they enjoy it.

*Inez Farrington
West Paris*

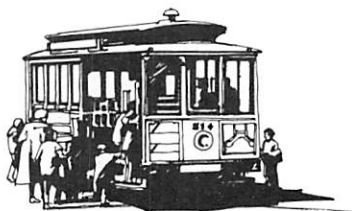
MORE MIKKONENS

It was so very good to have someone write an article of the Finnish people — interesting, well done — and am looking forward to the next issue.

I, too, am a Mikkonen, my grandfather having been a brother of Jacob Mikkonen. Now in my leisure years and leisure time I am working on the Mikkonen family tree — just for fun.

Your articles are appealing. Wishing you continued success.

Alma J. Dixon



Was at my sister's in Norway over the weekend and saw the article on the Finns in the March copy of **BitterSweet**.

Jacob Mikkonen was my great-uncle — I am a Mikkonen.

If I remember correctly, wasn't Kuhmo, Finland spelled Kuhino in the article? Maybe I am wrong.

My parents are in the picture of the church group — a copy of it is among Mother's pictures, which are still in West Paris, the home now being used as a summer home by my oldest sister and her husband.

Mina Coolidge

We regret the editorial error. — Ed.

OLD MASTER

BitterSweet is beautiful.

I read Mr. Harry Walker's article of V. Akers... very true: Mr. Walker is a good friend of mine.

I studied ART with V. some twelve years and I can say AKERS was truly a Great Old Master — like Vermeer (circa 1632) AKERS knew the meaning of LIGHT. Without light there is no ART.

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...page 45

religiously-oriented camping experiences he had, and felt they turned his life in the right direction. He wants to give this same experience to others.

Retreats will be held at the Center in the winter.

Norman cut his architectural teeth on the couple's beautiful home. They lived in the basement until he finished it. Now, the sunny kitchen's vista of fields, trees and hills keep Vicki relaxed and happy as she works at her dough art, in spite of her many responsibilities as the mother of three boys, Stephen, 10, Scott, 7 and Shawn, 3.

The walls of the children's rooms, and the rest of the house, are decorated gaily with original plaques and name signs which Vicki has designed. Her touch is everywhere, creating spots of color and beauty in every nook and cranny.

"Anybody who can make bread, can make art dough," she says. In fact, it's easier than bread because it hasn't any yeast."

Vicki Jackson's recipe is simply this:

4 cups of flour (more or less)

1 cup of salt

1 ½ cups of water

Knead well, about ten minutes, and then you're ready to sculpt. Don't wait for it to rise. It won't.

Try making figures of little boys and girls engaged in some form of play. Vicki has art dough plaques featuring everything from little skiers to fishermen, clowns, junior rock collectors and even a bathtub with three little kids in it. If you plan to add a prop later, such as dried flowers, be sure to leave a space for it.

Animals are also fun to do and pigs are probably the easiest.

Bake your dough figures on a cookie sheet in a slow oven (225°) overnight or as long as 24 hours, until they are very hard. Then paint with acrylics. When dry, brush on four coats of shellac, allowing each coat to dry thoroughly.

Glue with a strong, quick-drying glue onto boards which have been sanded and stained; add a wall hanger, and, voila! You're done!

Best of all, even the kids can do it. That's a real boon for the days when the school bus isn't running.




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